of either product, lay with the person found in possession of the commodity. With regard to tea in Travancore, the onus of proof lay on the Superintendent of the estate from which the tea was stolen, which was quite impracticable, as stolen tea was so easily mixed with other teas. If all dealers in tea were licensed, a further source of revenue would be opened to the Government, and the onus of proof of possession would then lie with the dealer.

There had been long correspondence with the Government on the above subject, but it led to nothing. Tea crops increased year by year in all tea-producing districts of the State and the need for legislation became more and more urgent. The member therefore suggested the introduction of a Bill to deal with that important matter and to safeguard an industry which provided so large a proportion of the State revenue.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Cantlay, the subject on which you have spoken was placed before the Government, last year. The Government have been getting the opinion of their legal advisers and other officers. The general opinion seems to be that it is inexpedient to have legislation on the same lines as the Rubber Thefts Prevention Regulation. One important difference between rubber and tea is worthy of note in this connection. While rubber as such is not consumed in this State, tea is an article of consumption here. If a man is found dealing in rubber, 100 to 1, he may be taken to be a thief, but not so a man who is dealing with the other article. It seems to me that there is thus a great difference between rubber and tea. Government cannot in the present circumstances therefore promise to undertake legislation in this matter. But if your Association thinks that it is a matter which ought to be legislated upon, then I would suggest that a private Bill be introduced by your representative in the Legislative Council when all parties will consider the question. But as at present circumstanced, Government are not advised to start legislation on this subject. I shall be glad to consider any other method of preventing thefts that you can suggest.

26. Certain suggestions for improving the condition of agriculturists especially of Nanjinad.

MR. S. AZHAKIANAYAKAM PILLAI (*Agastisvaram taluk*) said that the most serious drawback of the agriculturists was the high price of manure and green manure leaves. He suggested the following remedial measures:—

(i) Prohibitory export duties should be levied on *punnac*, bones and fish manures, which were exported in large quantities from the State.

(ii) The ryots had to obtain passes from the forest authorities for taking green manure from forests. The necessity to obtain the passes should be dispensed with.

(iii) The ryots should be allowed to plant manure trees on tank-beds and river bunds.

The authorities concerned might be empowered to allow the ryots to plant trees only in such places and in such manner as would not cause injury to the river bunds.

Lack of sufficient capital for carrying on agriculture in an efficient manner was another difficulty which the ryots were labouring under. For the removal of agricultural indebtedness, land mortgage banks should be opened and financed out of the funds available in Anchal Savings Banks.

The Tekkumalai and Tadakamalai reserves, which were unfit for plantation, should be reserved for the free grazing of sheep and goats with a view to promote the rearing of those animals and to increase the indigenous manure available for agricultural purposes.

Though Government spent large sums of money for opening irrigation canals and channels, the ryots of several taluks experienced serious difficulties in regard to irrigation. The irrigation canals and channels of Nanjinad were not properly looked after. Annual repairs and maintenance works were not promptly attended to. The completion of the Alathurayar scheme would help to improve the condition of the ryots. Nearly half the area fed by the Tovala channel would be properly irrigated by the completion of that scheme. The scheme should therefore be immediately taken in hand and completed.

The method of distribution of seeds by the officers of the Agricultural Department stood in need of improvement. The officers should be directed to distribute seeds in large quantities to Co-operative Societies, for sale to the ryots.

In spite of the Rules and Regulations passed by Government for the use of proper measures for selling paddy, etc., the frauds practised by traders on the ryots went on unchecked. Neither the bad harvests nor the fall in the price of agricultural produce affected the ryots so seriously as the fraud practised in measuring paddy. The only means of remedying the evil was by the Government undertaking the manufacture and supply of *marakals* and other measures made of metals such as *Venkalam*, so as to prevent any tampering with them, and by strictly prohibiting the use of any other measures.

DEWAN'S REPLY : Mr. Azhakianayakam Pillai, you have raised many points in the course of your representation. They have all been noted and will be considered by Government.

27. Agricultural needs of South Travancore.

MR. K. N. PADMANABHA PILLAI (*Kalkulam taluk, Group I*) in dealing with the agricultural needs of South Travancore, urged the abolition of water cess for the following reasons :—

(i) Government realised a large revenue by the sale of tank-beds and other *poramboke* lands set free by the introduction of the Kodayar Irrigation Scheme.